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APRIL 2021 | VOLUME 12 | ISSUE 4

YOUR DONATION BENEFITS THE VENDORS.
PLEASE BUY ONLY FROM BADGED VENDORS.

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GROUND COVER

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A letter to Governor Whitmer about homelessness during the pandemic

Governor Whitmer, My name is Jim Clark. I reside in Washtenaw County. My current address is 312 W. Huron St, Ann Arbor Michigan, also known as the Robert J. Delonis homeless shelter. It is staffed and operated by the Washtenaw County Shelter Association. This will be the second time I have been homeless since the COVID crisis began here in Ann Arbor almost a year ago. In that time I have watched you strive to keep us safe, even after all the push back and rebellion.

As a homeless constituent (I voted for you), I have nowhere to quarantine myself for the length of time needed for the virus to run its course. I stay at the Delonis Center at night, but even in the shelter, there are times we cannot stay inside. Many of us travel to a day warming center, but that will be discontinued at the end of March or April. For a homeless person, "quarantining" happens outside, away from the general public, or in jail. There are no other options.

My opinion of the mask/social distancing strategy is that it serves the middle, those who will reluctantly follow policy. Humans are social beings, meaning we need to be around each other physically, or we deteriorate physically. Quarantine is a time-tested method of dealing with large outbreaks. This much should be apparent. Further, our constitution itself allows for disasters and emergencies on this level. Those systems should have been activated this past winter. It would have been easier to keep citizens inside long enough for the virus to reach the end of its lifecycle without replicating. This is still the best option.

Here is why Camp Take Notice was shut down:

- During that spring, former President Obama was scheduled to deliver a graduation address. The camp was too visible from the freeway.

Filmmaker Tavis Smiley and

Princeton professor Cornel West filmed footage of Camp Take Notice as part of their five-part PBS special, "The Poverty Tour: A Call to Conscience." It was believed this embarrassed then-Governor Rick Snyder.

- An anonymous donor wanted to help put an access road into the camp. Since they made a formal offer, MDOT had to acknowledge the Camp (they were offering amnesty for low-profile) and enforce its trespassing policy.

Here is how Camp Take Notice can help you:

We are volunteering to take the high road in our shared struggle by sequestering ourselves in our former location and by establishing similar camps throughout the county. We are self-contained and live in a tribe-like social dynamic. We travel from one shelter to another every day and would rather have one spot to sit in.

We would welcome the quarantine. We can take care of ourselves, we can manage our own affairs. However, we are not opposed to assistance from the county through services from the



Caleb Poirier, founder of CTN, stands to speak at a meeting. Before it was bulldozed, Camp Take Notice was a self-governing refuge for unhoused people. Reviving it would allow homeless people a place to create their own bubble during the pandemic.

GROUNDCOVER

Mission

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

Susan Beckett — publisher

Michael Corrigan — assistant director

Catherine Nouhan — editor

Lindsay Calka — layout editor



JIM CLARK
Groundcover vendor No. 139

government as it is and see it as an enigmatic, sinister entity. The hysteria caused by a state-mandated quarantine enforced by martial law is daunting enough to rule it out as a choice. I would like to make you an offer that will help a significant portion of the population and give you a stronghold in our battle against the virus.

Camp Take Notice was started by a man named Caleb Poirier, in 2011. He and a large group of homeless people in Ann Arbor set up a camp on MDOT property in response to an overload at the shelter and the general lack of affordable housing in the area. They operated as a small village. They had power, a central meeting place, regular meetings, a clear leadership hierarchy, and the beginnings of sanitation infrastructure. They had their share of problems, but nothing that any other village in Michigan does not have. For a more detailed account see Groundcover News July 2012 Camp Take Notice Given Notice on pg 4.

This is why Camp Take Notice was shut down:

- During that spring, former President Obama was scheduled to deliver a graduation address. The camp was too visible from the freeway.

Filmmaker Tavis Smiley and

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MEET YOUR VENDOR



Joe Woods, vendor No. 103

Where do you usually sell Groundcover News? Liberty and Main.

When and why did you start selling Groundcover News? 8 years ago when I was unemployed.

If you had a warning label, what would it say? Proceed with caution.

What is your pet peeve? Litter and rude people.

If you had to eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be? Collard greens, fried chicken, corn bread, macaroni and cheese, and for dessert German chocolate cake.

If you could do anything for a day, what would it be? Take over the world. (For good not bad!)

What words do you live by? Everything happens for a reason. When what you feel is bad, find the good in it.

What is the best way to start the day? The best way to start any day is with GOD. Period.

What is your superpower? Positivity, if you are positive through situations the outcome is usually better.

Coming into spring with a positive mindset



KEVIN SPANGLER
Groundcover vendor No. 307

rent and to help finish building the Android app.

Treehouse has decided to commit to a full year of advertising. They have been breaking patron records daily. The owners have thanked me for the extremely positive hard work I have been putting in. Hearing compliments makes me feel as though I am making a difference.

I am working towards hiring 66 people to create the pedicab movement I have been visualizing and advancing toward over the years. We are installing six more motors this coming month so that all our pedicabs can make 3.5-mile radius trips. We are off to a fantastic start and are working diligently to inspire countless people with our work and to enrich their lives.

We hope everyone is excelling in their day-to-day and living from a place of personal dignity because everyone's life is precious and worth the highest degree of respect.

The joys of beautiful March and April



DENISE SHEARER
Groundcover vendor No. 485

and April is that spring is coming soon. Rabbits are my favorite animals to see in the spring because they are happy, cute and cuddly. I like rabbits because they hop fast and they have big ears to hear everything. I wish I could hear like that. I could probably hear sounds farther than I can now. I wish I could move fast like a rabbit, but I do enjoy taking my time when I go out for a walk.

celebrate this one holiday for a longer period of time with lots of different people. We enjoyed seeing each other for Easter every year. This year, I will eat a special meal for the Easter holiday at home by myself, but I'll talk with my family on the phone.

The happy thing about March



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Crossroads in STEM diversity, equity and inclusion: empowering underrepresented racial minorities

"As the U.S. has transformed rapidly to an information-based economy, employment in science, technology, engineering and math occupations has grown – outpacing overall job growth. Since 1990, STEM employment has grown 79% (9.7 million to 17.3 million) and computer jobs have seen a whopping 338% increase over the same period."

— Carey Funk and Kim Parker,
PEW Research Center Report (2018)



WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

the Crossroads." This report is known within the science and public policy communities as "The Crossroad Report." That report suggested that we need to quadruple or even quintuple our nation's investment in STEM education in order to be competitive with the industrial nations of Europe and Asia. The report identifies that improving awareness of college STEM opportunities in pre-k through high school, providing more financial support to make higher education affordable and focusing more attention on academic and social support are key.



Patricia Bath was New York's first African American female doctor to receive a patent for a medical invention. She invented a device designed to help remove cataracts with a fiber-optic laser.



Dr. Wille Hobbs was the first Black woman to earn a PhD in Physics. She graduated from the University of Michigan in 1972.

numbers of Black and Hispanic healthcare workers, like nurses, were considered frontline/essential workers during the pandemic. Many were infected with COVID-19, and thousands died when they worked to save lives. The national lockdowns and stay-safe at home did not include most health-care workers.

There ought to be a cultural transformation at every level of STEM education and the workforce. Women and minorities should feel a sense of belonging in a male-dominated work environment. Underrepresented racial minorities should feel they are valued, that they are welcomed and that their voices and ideas matter.

In 2016, The CBE Life Science Education Journal said that "The United States' inability to achieve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce diversity goals has long been attributed to the failure of the academic "pipeline" to maintain a steady flow of underrepresented minority students. While there have been some gains, national data continue to show that the disparity in STEM degree attainment for African American, Hispanic or Latino/Latina, American Indian, and Alaska Native students increases at each degree level, compared with white and Asian students."

The troubling statistics about STEM and underrepresented racial minorities have prompted some Groundcover News writers to embark on projects to highlight the inadequacies of diversity, equity and inclusion in STEM fields. My article from last month's issue, "Empowering Women in STEM Programs and Careers," pointed out that women have made significant progress in life sciences, physical sciences and biomedical engineering during the past generation.

The PEW research report confirmed such findings of stable growth. However, there has been a noticeable decline in women's STEM occupational clusters with the largest job growth—computer scientists, systems analysts, software developers, information systems managers and programmers.

Black, Hispanic and Native American Underrepresentation are National Policy Issues

There is a changing United States demographic picture — more diverse, more multiracial and multi-ethnic. A U.S. congressional mandate required the National Academies — American Academy of Arts and Sciences, National Academy of Engineering and the National



Katherine Johnson was one of the first Black women to work as a NASA scientist. Her mathematical calculations were critical for the success of the first and subsequent US-crewed spaceflights.

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Broadening STEM participation with equitable spaces

WILL SHAKESPEARE

Dr. Brian Nord Is a Wisconsin Native. He received a Bachelor's degree in physics from The John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland in 2003. After graduation, he accepted an offer to do his PhD in physics and astronomy at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He was awarded the Michigan PhD in 2010. He also did his post-doctoral research in Arbor before moving to the University of Chicago's department of astronomy and astrophysics as a faculty member, and the FERMI Federal Government Research Lab where he works as a Research Scientist.

Dr. Nord is an accomplished scientist and a community activist. The brutal killing of George Floyd had an effect on him as well as millions of Americans who cried out for peace and justice. With help from scientist friends at the University of New Hampshire and elsewhere, he led a Black Lives Matter march which involved more than 5,500 American scientists in June 2020. Dr. Nord has been interviewed by several newspapers across the nation, including The New York Times and The Chicago Tribune.

Always interested in community engagement and social justice, Dr. Brian Nord became Board President of M.I.S.S.I.O.N. — an Ann Arbor non-profit community organization, during his doctoral and post-doctoral research at the University of Michigan.

From your experience, what are the barriers to success in STEM education and careers?

Nord: The barriers are many and have stood too long. The barriers include exclusionary behaviors of people and exclusionary policies within organizations that create unwelcoming and hostile environments for Black, Indigenous and People of Color. There are also insufficient resources made available for Black people and other persons of color to access STEM education and professions. On another level, there are at least two major barriers to achieving equality, equity, and justice in scientific spaces and organizations.

First, there is a lack of urgency at every level of most science organizations with regard to addressing white supremacy; I don't think people have a detailed understanding of what needs to change. Second, and related, most people are not engaging their imagination and creativity in problem-solving for this challenge. If scientists can imagine new particles, forces

of nature, and grand engineering feats, why can't they imagine research spaces that are just and equitable?

What do you consider the best strategies or keys to success in STEM education and careers?

Nord: For BIPOC individuals seeking to work in STEM, I don't think there are any keys or certain pathways to "success." However I think there are a few things that people should be ready to do. In professional, academic science, it's critical to become an expert in some specific aspect of a field — especially in the case of pursuing a PhD. There isn't a substitute for acquiring this expertise. Along the way to this, those who are Black, Indigenous or people of color, are likely to experience significant acute and systemic oppressive behaviors. Learning to work through this likely will lead to building skill sets other than those used in the lab or on the computer: navigating environments of systemic oppression requires advanced skills in communication, diplomacy and the history of science. This is part of what we mean when we say we have to be twice as good.

If we're talking about our entire community being successful — that is, in ending racism and misogyny in scientific environments — then it means that we'll have to come to a new way of thinking about the problems we face. We'll need to be more honest than we ever have been before about how deep-seated the problems are, and what they really are at their core: it's not just unconscious bias, it's racism, it's misogyny. That's what our structures and policies are, in large part, built on.

What role did mentoring and mentorship play in your STEM education and career?

Nord: All scientists need mentoring throughout our entire career. These mentoring relationships and communities should be developed with a focus on 1) career and educational interests of the mentee, 2) career and educational experience of the mentor, and 3) a shared set of experiences between the two people. It's really important for people to have professional connections with folks who have experienced some of the similar things in their lives — for example, challenges in pathways caused by marginalization and disenfranchisement.

Far too often, Black students, for example, are paired with well-meaning white professors who know little about their experiences or have little interest in learning on their own time



Dr. Brian Nord has thought deeply about diversity, equity and inclusion in the STEM fields.

about those experiences. We shouldn't make Black students teach their white mentors about racism, but that's what often happens in academia.

How can we improve the STEM pipelines and ensure success for underrepresented racial minorities?

Nord: I'll mostly refer to my answer to number one. I'll add that we really prioritize funding in our budgets to increase access to opportunity. If it's not in a budget, it's not a priority. I'll also say that we need to stop talking like we need to fix Black people. Much of the conversation on this topic is about how to provide specialized navigation skills to Black folks. We need to stop the behaviors that make us need special navigation skills. This means we need to hold people and institutions accountable.

Please comment on the ideas of motivation and capitalization of efforts for minorities in STEM education.

Nord: I think we ask students to make too many sacrifices for careers in science. We ask them to sacrifice mental health, generational wealth, proximity to family. We need to do our job of creating research and academic environments that don't make them give up their lives to achieve their dreams.

Finally, tell us about how faculty/relationship and collaboration made a difference in your STEM education and your workforce careers.

Nord: I've had several mentors in my life. Many of them have been great — compassionate, thoughtful, supportive, empathetic. My greatest mentors have focused on me as a person and how they could help me achieve my dreams,

regardless of scientific context. These folks helped in a lot of ways — professional career navigation advice, providing a sounding board for scientific discussions, recommending me for speaking opportunities and more. Sometimes, people found me. Other times, I had to find them. That is, I often did the intentional work of finding folks who I thought would provide good mentorship. Also, I learned early on to not expect any one person to mentor me in all aspects that I needed.

It's also important to note that as a man, I have significant privilege in finding a mentor who has had similar or shared experiences, because men are overrepresented in science. It's much harder for women and gender minorities to find mentors who have shared experiences with them.

Groundcover Principles as a Statement of Solidarity with Humanity

The tragic and senseless attack on the three Asian spas in Atlanta reminds us that racist violence is not limited to Black lives, nor is sexism just a problem for women. Our hearts go out to the Asian-American community at this time and we encourage all to find a way to engage in meaningful action in support of justice for all people.

From its inception, **Groundcover News** has approached all its activities with belief in the following principles, as written on our website:

- All people have the right to dignity.
- Diversity has intrinsic value.
- Poverty is political — systemic change is necessary.
- Building community is essential to social change.
- Political effectiveness requires staying power.
- Solutions to poverty must involve people who are directly affected.
- Risks are necessary to create positive change.
- Meeting people where they are honors their skills and potential.
- We are committed to quality, professionalism, and accountability in everything we do.

We feel our attachment to these principles even more strongly today. If they resonate with you too, and you are looking for a way to make a difference during these life-changing times, please join us as a volunteer, supporter, friend or Board Member. To let us know, email: contact@groundcovernews.com.

"The Golden Rule" is Essential to Talking About Housing

Discussions around housing can be very complicated because the word means different things to different people. For some, housing means a roof over your head. For others, it means the famous American dream: to one day own your own house, leading you to a better life.

Idealists like me think that housing goes beyond just having a roof over your head. Housing means having a home. The reality during the pandemic is that inequity is more visible and becomes impossible to ignore. For many people home is living in your car, with permission to park somewhere overnight but the need to keep moving on during the day. Home is a motel room with the worry of whether you'll be able to pay for it next week because what you earn isn't enough. It's not enough for you to put down a deposit and pay a month's rent somewhere else, now that you've been evicted. You were evicted because you lost your job, because they closed the restaurant where you worked, and your wife has to



IDALIA RIOS
Community Change correspondent

privacy for your family, is also a kind of homelessness.

When I decided to emigrate to the United States my dream was to build a house on land my father-in-law gave us. Achieving the American dream hasn't been easy so far. I now live in one bedroom with my two children. My ex-husband was deported and so my journey of learning about homelessness began. Now I know that I, too, am homeless. So are many other families, without realizing it. I have a roof over my head, but I don't have a decent housing situation. For many emigrant and low-income families, the laws and regulations that exist create barriers to finding decent housing. In many cases, racism, and discrimination persist.

Housing is an essential human need. The next time we want to advocate, to fight, to bring about change around education, fair wages, violence, or human rights, we should remember that everything begins with having a home. Everything revolves around housing.

If you have the power to make a decision, the power to help enact a policy, and if you are responsible for representing the most vulnerable, take action! Remember the Golden Rule: do for others as you would wish them to do for you. If you desire a better future and a better planet, have empathy and put yourself in someone else's shoes. Everyone has the power to bring about change. The decision to take action is in your hands. Everyone deserves decent housing. When we take care of the neediest among us everyone in the community benefits.

Idalia Ríos is an immigrant and mother of two who lives in Santa Ana, California. Idalia is also a community leader with the Residents United Network (RUN) and is a member of the Housing Justice Narrative Fellowship Program led by the organization Community Change.

Originally published by *The Denver Voice* 2020. © www.street-newsservice.org

Anne Bannister on homelessness and local solutions

Thank you for asking me to contribute to Groundcover. This is such a needed publication and gives our community the viewpoints of people we might not otherwise hear from.

There are so many reasons people and families become homeless. It is not a singular problem and there is no single solution. It's a complicated problem and needs lots of different solutions. These factors contribute to homelessness in Ann Arbor and everywhere else: physical or mental illness, job loss, domestic violence or abuse, lack of knowledge of resources, lack of resources in the community, veterans of war suffering from mental and health challenges, or people who just opt out of the social system on purpose.

At the social and cultural level, systemic forms of racism, classism and other kinds of discrimination and disenfranchisement play a big part. We also have an economy that is structured to prioritize Return On Investment (ROI) over all other considerations.

Inequity based on racism, homelessness or any other quality used to discriminate against someone, affects all aspects of that individual's life from healthcare, employment, education, to transportation, religion, access to tools, and housing. This list is just the start. Ann Arbor



ANNE BANNISTER
HHS Advisory Board member

members. The well being of society depends on everyone being housed, being healthy, having education, and access to economic opportunity. When you leave people out the entire community becomes vulnerable.

Solutions will have to come from all levels of government and organizations of all kinds. Faith based communities can offer shelter, clothing, food, or other support services. Families and individuals can volunteer or donate to a cause that supports the unsheltered. Businesses can donate money or offer services. Everyone can support elected (candidates) and administrative (staff) officials by voting and by campaigning to elect candidates who will help the unsheltered.

The current pandemic and economic storm are going to contribute more challenges to individuals and families who are already unsheltered, and will almost certainly tip many others over into the community of the unsheltered. This is not a hypothetical situation. This change will be clear to everyone as, over the coming months, more and more people are evicted from their homes across the country because they cannot pay rent or mortgages.

We need to take care of the whole community because the strength of the community depends on all

Tours. These are the result of collaboration among the unsheltered population and other stakeholders and existing organizations. They are great examples of power and agency among the homeless.

All this being said, I believe there is a very important role that can be played by the City of Ann Arbor in working to provide the supports and services needed by the unsheltered community here in our City.

I am a member of the Housing and Human Services Advisory Board of City Council and our priorities are the same things that are important to the unsheltered. We are working to provide housing across a wide range of affordability to as many people as possible. I support the efforts of the Housing Commission to build affordable housing at the corner of Catherine and Fourth.

It has been shown again and again that often the best solutions come not from the experts but from the people experiencing the problem, and from other people who are very interested in solving it. This does not mean discounting or eliminating expertise or professional opinions. Experts and professionals are important stakeholders too. It just means that the search for solutions is expanded to

see SOLUTIONS next page ➔

The Dot Org launches free period product subscription service for Washtenaw County

OLIVIA HINTZ, CAMERON DALTON, MADISON CUTLER, ABIGAIL BUSH
The Dot Org Outreach Team

Code red. Aunt Flow. That time of the month. You know what we're talking about: periods.

Menstruation is one of those perfectly natural, nourishing cycles of hygiene health that, for some reason, we hate talking about. And since we struggle talking about the topic in general, we often fail to acknowledge the inequities that come with having a period, specifically regarding the accessibility of period products.

According to a survey conducted by Kotex in 2018, one in four menstruators struggle to purchase period products due to the cost. (The term "menstruators" means a person who has a period. We specifically use this inclusive, gender-neutral term because all gender identities can have a period.) The same study found that potentially unsafe alternatives are frequently used, such as socks or toilet paper.

Menstrual products are taxed in more than 75% of states. Most public

restrooms — including those in Ann Arbor — either lack period products, have broken distribution machines, or provide uncomfortable, outdated products. The issue of period inequity is a public health matter — and we must fight for legislative justice regarding menstrual product accessibility.

In the meantime, The Dot Org is a local organization dedicated to providing free period products for those experiencing poverty and homelessness in the University of Michigan and Ann Arbor communities. The Dot Org also focuses on reducing the stigma associated with menstruation, as well as raising awareness of menstruation-related health inequalities.

The Dot Org is a tight-knit, non-profit organization established in 2017 by four University of Michigan students. The Dot Org has been passionate about providing assistance for our beloved, local Ann Arbor community. We hold awareness and education events surrounding menstruation-related issues, (now virtual) fundraisers for period product donations, and personal hygiene product drives. We've collaborated with several other Ann Arbor organizations, such as The Delonis Center, Peace House Ypsi and Mercy House. However, due to the cyclical and personalized nature of periods, The Dot Org has been searching for a more efficient and effective way to directly aid those in need of our services.

Thus, in order to help our Ann Arbor community members take care of "down there," The Dot Org developed a free period-package subscription service for those in need. This means our organization will create personalized packages of personal hygiene necessities based on individual needs. Any menstruator who resides



Left: Olivia Hintz and Groundcover vendor Will Shakespeare at Michigan Movement's Project Connect in November 2019. The Dot Org has been doing distribution of menstrual products in the Ann Arbor community since the organization's inception in 2017.



Right: The Dot Org period packs each contain tampons, pads and underwear.

in the Washtenaw County area is eligible for a period-package.

The service works like this:

1. a person contacts The Dot Org via email, call or text
2. requests what kinds and the amount of period or personal hygiene products needed (for example, a menstrual cup, 15 Regular tampons, a box of Super menstrual pads, three pairs of size M underwear)
3. provides a time and place for direct, contactless drop-off
4. receives their personalized, free period-package!

If the week of the cycle every month is known, a recurring monthly drop-off time and place can be set up. As mentioned before, this service is

completely free. We believe accessibility to menstrual products is a human right, and our mission is to make them available to all.

In order to contact The Dot Org directly for a personalized package, email thedotorgumich@gmail.com or text or call 248.807.6858. If you would like to donate to our organization to help make this service possible, feel free to Venmo us at @thedotorg. Just \$2 can help us buy enough products to cover one menstruator's cycle! The Dot Org also accepts physical donations. If you'd like to donate already purchased products, such as period products or underwear, please contact the information above.

► SOLUTIONS from previous page

include people and groups who may not customarily have been invited to the table.

Recently the topic of tiny homes, and creating a community of tiny homes, to shelter the unsheltered, has started to be discussed. This is an example of the kind of solution that would require the input, cooperation and commitment of a number of different stakeholders to become reality.

This is the kind of wide engagement I have always practiced and continue to practice, to serve the best interests of both the City of Ann Arbor and the people who live here. This is how I have done my job as a member of City Council for the last 2 ½ years. I seek solutions by involving a broad group

of stakeholders especially those impacted by the problem, and we all work together to come up with a systemic improvement that is better than the situation we are trying to fix.

I am investigating the use of Local Development Finance Authority funding to provide free WIFI in the downtown area because it is an allowable expense. This will help the homeless have access to the same wealth of information available to everyone else who has a smart phone, a tablet or a computer. It will help the unsheltered stay in touch with their friends and families, access education and pursue business opportunities.

which I am still exploring. The other is Zoom online meetings between unsheltered and permanently housed residents so that people can meet and greet and come to understand different viewpoints, problems and,

NEED FREE HYGIENE PRODUCTS? underwear, period products, masks?

The Dot Org is a subscription service delivering free & personalized monthly hygiene packages directly to you!

Have no need for products but interested in donating? Feel free to contact us as well!



CONTACT 248.807.6858
thedotorgumich@gmail.com



hopefully find great solutions. These proposals are far from a full solution, but they are steps on a path. A path we can all walk together.

House bill could help formerly incarcerated persons receive mental health treatment

ALICIA LONG
Delonis Center case manager

While in prison all incarcerated persons are entitled to appropriate medical care, including mental health. After release, these needs may go unmet if an individual does not know where to look or who to ask for help. Providing mental health discharge planning to connect individuals to these resources before their release would lower barriers to reentry into society and could provide the hope these individuals deserve.

House Bill 4045 has a goal to provide extensive mental health discharge planning for all who have received mental

health care or medication while incarcerated. Let us back our community members who have been affected by the lack of supports when re-entering society from the prison system by advocating for the passage of House Bill 4045. Please join me in urging Representative Filler to present this bill to the Committee on Judiciary at their next meeting.

Representative Graham Filler
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone# (517) 373-1778
Email: GrahamFiller@house.mi.gov

Michigan legislature impedes pro-democracy measure

SUSAN BECKETT
Publisher

Our democracy is on borrowed time: Just two months ago we weathered a violent attempt to overthrow a free and fair election. If we do not take decisive action now to preserve our democracy, we stand to lose it. Instead of confronting and negating this threat, the Michigan legislature is using its influence to make voting more difficult and derail the federal pro-democracy measures in H.R. 1.

H.R. 1, the For the People Act in the U.S. House, stands as a bulwark against anti-democratic threats such as voter suppression and manipulation. It covers three major areas: voting and elections, campaign finance and ethics.

First, it would:

- reduce barriers that keep eligible citizens from registering and then casting their votes;
- set minimum, uniform standards for elections; and
- provide funding to increase the security of our elections.

These reforms have long had bipartisan support among the electorate and have already been implemented in many states.

Second, H.R. 1 would increase the transparency of spending on elections and campaign ads and strengthen protections against foreign interference in our campaigns.

Third, it requires increased disclosure of lobbying activities and codifies ethical guidelines to prevent conflicts of interest by staff, appointees, members of Congress and even presidents.

Instead of embracing these changes, the Michigan Senate passed a resolution in mid-March urging Congress and President Biden to oppose H.R. 1. Senate Resolution 25 states that H.R. 1 would "enshrine into law many misguided election policies."

H.R. 1 would impede the maintenance of accurate voter registration lists and the enforcement of sensible voter identification standards," said State Sen. Ruth Johnson, R-Holly, the bill's sponsor.

Perhaps H.R. 1 could be improved, as often happens with legislation before it is signed into law. That the Michigan Senate went so far as to call for its demise indicates their overall opposition to pro-democracy measures. It is consistent with actions that garnered the Michigan legislature's rating as the worst in the country on ethics.

It is time to spread the word throughout Michigan that voters won't stand for this kind of interference. Constituents need to contact their state representatives and voice their opposition to anti-democracy legislation and let their state senators know they are aware of their actions and disapprove of them.



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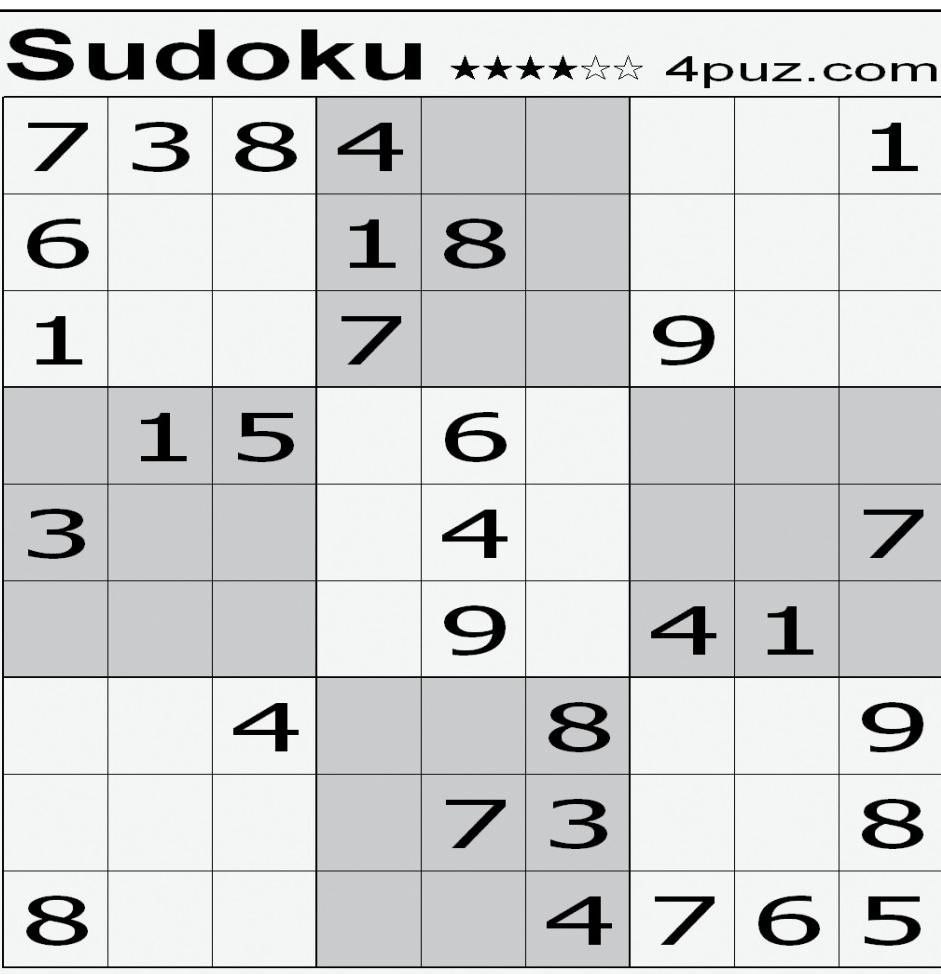
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washtenaw.org/homeimprovement

Help your friends and family stay warm this winter by having them give our home improvement program team a call.

Our office has multiple programs* that offer free home repairs such as furnace or fridge replacement, insulation, and more!

*Eligibility is based on household income.



Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Let's Eat! Peter A. Collins

CROSS
1. Molten rock in the earth
6. Time in Chi-Town when it's noon in L.A.
11. Spike preceder, on the volleyball court
14. Starters, sportwise
15. "Nobodies go to that restaurant anymore because it's too crowded" speaker
16. Language akin to Thai
17. Dynamite Mahi Mahi source on Depot St.
19. Medium power?
20. Gold medal-winning skater Kukla
21. Gallery hanging
22. Salmonid source on Depot St.
24. Samuel L. ___ (a.k.a. Mark Twain)
26. Construct
27. ___ Lanka
28. Old PC monitor letters
29. Canyon and Sierra
32. Area abutting the UM Hospitals, for short
35. Capital of Ghana
37. Indigenous New Zealanders
38. Chicken Shawarma source on Liberty St.

30. Wavy spotter's cry
32. Cracked, as a door
33. Singer McEntire
34. Reinstate

DOWN

1. Word with carpet or marker
2. In the least
3. Coming-out party?
4. Chairwomen's titles
5. Poehler of "Parks and Recreation"
6. Vail lifters?
7. Split
8. "The Lord of the Rings" baddie
9. Like Ikea pieces
10. French Revolution leader
11. Power-saving state
12. "Piece of cake!"
13. Blouses and shirts
18. Former auto racer Patrick
23. Simple syrup ingredient
25. Clear
26. Hyde Park strollers
28. Thin pancake
30. Rowing sport

31. Wavy function
32. Cracked, as a door
33. Singer McEntire
34. Reinstate

36. This puzzle has 78 of them
37. One from a book
39. Handy

40. Theodor ___ (a.k.a. Dr. Seuss)

45. One-named "You Gotta Be" singer

47. "To Kill a Mockingbird" author Lee

49. Goads

50. Earthmover, for short

51. Kidder's "Superman" costa

52. "Richard III" and "Henry V"

53. Comedian Wanda

54. Clear

55. Olympic blade

56. Opera star Pinza

60. See 54-Across

61. Pay stub abbreviation

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Bethlehem-ucc.org facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2

Bethlehem Church is home of the Groundcover office



APRIL 2021 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Bethlehem has cancelled all in-person activities due to COVID-19.

Here are ways you can experience our 10 am worship service on Sundays:

Most Simple - Tune in to our live radio broadcast on WAAM 1600AM.

You can also listen to WAAM on Tune In by following this link

: <http://www.mainstreamnetwork.com/listen/player.asp?station=waam-am&listen=Listen+Live>.

(Click the shiny "play" button on the lower left of the page, ignoring any advertisements.)

Facebook

Beginning at 9:55 Sunday, you will find our Live Video at Bethlehem's Facebook

page: <https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2>

Following the 10 am service on Sunday, the video will be posted to the Bethlehem UCC website: www.bethlehem-ucc.org. We have begun posting the service to Bethlehem's YouTube page, it will be available there at 10 am on Sundays.

Thank you all. We look forward to worshiping together.

HOLY WEEK / EASTER WORSHIP

Maundy Thursday - 7:00 pm, ZOOM

Good Friday - 7:00 pm, ZOOM

Easter Sunday: 8:00 am, In Person

Worship @Bethlehem Cemetery

10:00 am via Facebook Live

Sunday Worship Times

10:00 am Sanctuary

streamed on Facebook



Responding to a trespass order

KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

In September 2020, I went to the People's Food Co-op in Ann Arbor several times. I am a member of the co-op, and even remember the store from the days when the Wildflower Bakery was next door. The last time I came out of the store two Ann Arbor police officers greeted me to confirm my identity. This was a serious intervention and a real disruption of my day. I took a breath to promote patience and respect—so as to welcome this reality as a learning experience.

The police then gave me a large pink sheet of paper and explained that it was a trespassing citation. If I went

back into the store, I would be subject to arrest. I managed enough of a natural breath to ask, "Why?" They explained that I had said a bad word in the store. I denied the accusation. I was informed that someone had come out of the store behind me and pointed me out to them as the offender. So, I added this pink sheet to my collection of papers.

As I write this in March 2021, I cannot find the bright pink sheet. There is some trauma in seeing, or even thinking about the pink citation. It is a reminder that I am officially sanctioned based on an accusation that took some serious investigation to even begin to unravel this life-changing mystery.

I took this bad news to my circle of humans in Ann Arbor where there is a history of trust and honesty. The first was Gaia Kile. Gaia was on the People's Food Co-op (PFC) Board for many years and went to a board meeting to raise his concerns about the decision to call the police. He and I spent some hours reading the bylaws of PFC.

I had to study a bit on the history of trespass. It arose in 13th century England as private property became the new religion and the march to capital accumulation began. Trespass, vagrancy and debtors' prison drove the yearning masses from Europe to America, originally the West Indies and then Augustine, Roanoke, Jamestown and Plymouth. Time to take a

breath and consider who we are. If trespass is to protect private property, how can I as a member owner get a trespass citation without signing it?

I've had two conversations with Angie, the general manager at the PFC. I requested due process in the belief that the co-op ethic requires consideration for the rights of co-op members. Angie assured me of her right to call the police based on the information she had. The citation lasts for a year.

April is coming. The PFC annual meeting and Earth Day are both in April. May we welcome this moment to prepare for the future. Please help me bring this to a creative conclusion.

A Perspective on Personal Philosophy from Groundcover vendor Larzell Washington

"Stay the same age until you turn a different age. Nature versus nurture; honor your parents. Learn how to forgive while you're still young."

— Larzell Washington

Each and every one of us goes through this life with our own individual paths and purposes. We find our clarity and direction by being guided by our principles and values. Personal philosophies help us to see the path in front of us and make certain that the steps on the way are filled with harmony. Things are not always going to be wonderfully happy, but with a strong personal philosophy, you can often find the most joy possible.

For vendor Larzell Washington, the above quote is what he uses to get through the good and the bad times. Each part of the statement holds its own set of significance to his life.

'Stay the same age until you turn a different age.' For Larzell, this means staying in your lane; finding comfort with your time and current understanding. A huge feat when much of the world seems so focused on either the past or the future. However, for Larzell, he works to remind himself and others that there is beauty in the present moment. There is value in knowing who you are and what you have. For Larzell, it's about gratitude, the ability to cherish and respect one's life and life's decisions, to be happy and love others for all that they are worth. Larzell, in trying times, works hard to focus on the here and now and appreciate the living of life,



JAZ BRENNAN
Groundcover intern

not just the building of it.

'Nature versus nurture. Honor your parents.' Larzell calls the attention of college students in this piece of his philosophy. When asked his understanding of the difference between the two words, Larzell states that nature is the act of carrying, delivering one into the world; whereas, to nurture is to be there. While there is a

special space for nature, and we must give homage to our parents, he calls on all to respect the nurturer, reminding us that this extends further than a mother and/or father. Many in our lives work to fill us of the things we need to get by. It takes a village to raise a child, and one might say our continued learning makes us, in a way, always children. We never stop needing our village, and Larzell reminds us to respect and hold gratitude for that.

'Learn to forgive while you're still young.' Forgiveness is a virtue, but it can be hard. It can be difficult to forgive others of their trespasses, and perhaps even harder to forgive



LARZELL WASHINGTON, vendor No. 128

lowing questions:

- What am I passionate about in this life?
 - What things bring me joy? (Try thinking outside of the material here. Cars and money are great, but isn't there also joy found in making someone smile?)
 - What is my/what do I want my mindset to be?
 - What do I value?
- Make a list of these things and see if you can't find some clarity on what you believe is important in life. Happy philosophizing, and thank you Larzell for sharing this powerful bit of perspective for us all.

We're killing civilians in Yemen

"We talk to family back home in Yemen and the question they ask is, 'Why is the United States supporting the Saudi coalition?' Hakim says, 'Profiteering is put before the lives of humans.'

— Jehan Hakim, Yemeni Alliance Committee



MARTIN STOLZENBERG
Groundcover contributor

dle-East wasn't complex?

This was occurring in 2014 as a Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman, was assuming a role that eventually led to his being named successor to the ailing king, al Saud. So,

the two sides have been fighting since his rise to power. The rebel Houthi forces then took over the Yemeni capital Sana'a in September 2015.

It wasn't complicated for the Obama administration. The United States took the side of our Saudi ally because of our 70-year alliance built on their readily available oil. Obviously, the revolutionary Houthi's ties to Iran, no friend to the United States since the 1970s, was a "no-no" for us.

This is really a religious war. The perpetrator of this horror is Saudi Arabia, follower of the Sunni line of Muslims. Their longtime foe is Iran, a Shia nation. Somehow, Yemen wound up as a battleground for their dispute. But aiding and abetting these atrocities, is that bastion of the free world, the United States, the country that has traditionally been the world's peacemaker.

How did this come about? There is a battle for power in Yemen. The revolutionaries want to take over the government, which they consider corrupt. The Saudis got into the melee on the side of the current government. They were interested because, in case of war, Iran would have ready access to Saudi Arabia through the Persian Gulf to its northern border. If the revolutionaries won, they would have Yemen, an Iranian ally who the Saudi's considered an Iranian proxy, on their southern border. If this happened, the

Saudis would wind up being caught in a pincer. Got it? Who said the Midway was a "no-no" for us?

Today, we are the world's largest arms dealer, and Saudi Arabia is our best customer. We sell the Saudis such goodies as planes, helicopters, bombs, missiles, and the spare parts that go with these treats. Sure enough, it was reported in June, 2019 by *In These Times* that over the last decade Saudi Arabia had ordered \$109.3 billion worth of military equipment from us.

The results are pitifully humanized by three examples. Saudi-led forces in April 2018 dropped bombs on a

wedding celebration in a Yemen village killing 21, including 11 children. In September 2016, 23 were killed in a bombing of a residential neighborhood in western Yemen. And, in August 2018, a school bus in Northern Yemen was bombed killing 40 children. What makes this particularly disheartening is that all of these events were verified as having been accomplished with bombs manufactured in the United States.

In Europe there is a mixed bag of feelings about arms sales to the Saudis among the supplier of arms. Cessation came after the assassination and dismembering of Jamal Khashoggi, a Saudi journalist living and working in the United States. He opposed the Saudi regime taken over by Muhammed bin Salman who is said to have personally ordered the killing.

In August 2018, following the horrific Khashoggi incident, Germany and the UK, the major European arms suppliers, suspended sales to Saudi Arabia. They were joined by Denmark and The Netherlands. Norway, Sweden and Austria had already declared they wouldn't sell arms to the Saudis. Yet by 2020, the UK was back peddling its armaments to Saudi Arabia. And of course the United States never blinked an eye, continuing its sales unabated.

It's also about time for the United States to relook at our policy toward Saudi Arabia. We should treat them as just another country and stop selling them all that hardware. After all, we are no longer dependent on Saudi Arabia for oil. As bad as things are here economically as a result of the coronavirus, we don't need this blood money from the sale of our armaments. This war has been a tragedy for the people of Yemen. It's not so hot for our country either. It harms us by offending our values of decency and doesn't help our position in the world.



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Very best vanilla pudding

ELIZABETH BAUMAN
Groundcover contributor

Ingredients:

1 cup sugar
2 Tablespoons cornstarch
3 cups half-and-half
4 egg yolks, slightly beaten
1 Tablespoon butter
2 teaspoons vanilla
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sea salt

Directions:

In a medium heavy saucepan combine sugar and cornstarch. Add half-and-half. Cook and gently stir (a whisk works best!) over medium heat until thick and bubbly. Cook and constantly stir 2 minutes more and then remove from heat. Stir 1 cup of the mixture into egg yolks. Slowly mix this back into the saucepan. Bring to a gentle boil, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and cook and stir for 2 more minutes. The key is to make sure you do not scorch the pudding!



Remove from heat and add butter, vanilla and sea salt.

Pour pudding into 6 individual serving bowls, cover surface of pudding with plastic wrap and allow to cool. Serve immediately or place in the refrigerator with plastic wrap over the bowls. Eat within 2 or 3 days.

Such a fine treat!

Haiku for George Floyd

RONALD PAGERESKI
Groundcover contributor

Bang the drum slowly
Carry him to his last stop
Where flowers shed tears.



**St. Francis invites you
to join in Mass by LiveStream:
or in-person**

Spanish: stfrancisa2.com/misa
English: stfrancisa2.com/mass

See our website for details on all worship services, events, and activities!

Due to Covid precautions, only registered parishioners of St. Francis are welcome to in-person services, and all must sign-up and register to be counted so that our numbers are within the acceptable range.

**Saturday Vigil 5 pm & 7 pm (español);
Sunday 8:30am, 10:30am, 12:30pm.
Daily Mon-Fri at 9:15am; Thurs Mass is
followed by a Holy Hour.**

We're Open!

Now Open Saturdays Only 9am-1pm



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Limited Capacity



Social Distance Required



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#MaxAccess: Washtenaw

Priority Eligibility for COVID-19 Vaccination
for People Age 16+ with Disabilities and/or
Chronic/ Severe Medical Conditions

POP-UP CLINICS

All require pre-registration. Contact the site you are interested in directly to schedule, or call 734-544-6700, or wchdpopup@washtenaw.org.

Upcoming pop-up clinics:

03/22 10am-1pm - Bethel AME, Ann Arbor (632 N. 4th Ave)
03/23 10am-1pm - Second Baptist Church, Ypsilanti (301 S. Hamilton St)
03/24 2-7pm - New Covenant Missionary Baptist, Ypsilanti (2345 Tyler Rd)

DRIVE-THRU

MASS VACCINE CLINICS

EMU Student Center, Tuesdays-Thursdays 9am-2pm
Register at bit.ly/EMUTest

Ford Field Clinic Detroit (open to all Michiganders)
Register at bit.ly/FordFieldVax or text EndCovid to 75049 or
call 888-535-6136 (press 1)

HOW TO OTHERWISE BOOK

Option 1: Complete survey at bit.ly/WashtenawVax

Option 2: Call 211 for help booking.

Option 3: Call the Michigan COVID-19 Hotline (888) 535-6136 Monday-Friday 8am-5pm

Option 4: Contact local pharmacies and health care providers, especially Meijer (text COVID to 75049) and Rite Aid, or check vaccinemi.com

Option 5: Scan QR Code or visit bit.ly/VaxSheet for a living resource of vaccine sites & accessibility info organized by area

Contact: DisabilityChair@geo3550.org



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